

JOHN G DAVIS.

2
J. O. Jones.

HIS OPINIONS UPON THE REPEAL OF THE

MISSOURI COMPROMISE;

HIS OPINIONS UPON THE

FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW.

CHOICE EXTRACTS FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE.

REMARKS BY J. O. JONES.

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JOHN G. DAVIS.

These extracts may be interesting and useful as showing to the people what kind of material they occasionally make a great man out of, and what degree of credit to give to mere politicians; men who never ask what is best for the country, but what will advance their own interests and ambition, and what will best promote the success of the *Party* to which they belong.

Under ordinary circumstances, I should not feel justified in making public the contents of private letters, but the conduct of Mr. Davis towards me personally, has absolved me from all such obligations, as is well known to many members of the party which is now supporting him in this District; besides, his unblushing effrontery in denouncing as Abolitionists, Sectionalists, and Disunionists, all who now entertain the same opinions he formerly did, and in claiming support on the ground of his advocacy of the Kansas Nebraska Bill, deserves exposure and condemnation.

If I were speaking to the citizens of Vigo County only, it would perhaps be unnecessary for me to say that I have been a Democrat from my youth upward, and have actively participated in the political contests as they have arisen for the last twenty years. I have always in sentiment, been opposed to Slavery; I have ever regarded it as a great moral, social, and political evil; as an unmitigated curse to both white and black races, but never proposed any other means than moral suasion for its eradication from our political system. I have had great confidence in the power of enlightened public sentiment to secure the ultimate triumph of Good over Evil, of Freedom over Slavery; and viewing things in that light I have ever considered it my duty, on all proper occasions, to bear testimony against Slavery. I have always admired the character of Thomas Jefferson, and recollect reading in his "Notes on Virginia," this sentiment: In view of the enormities of Slavery, which he had been portraying, he says: "I tremble for my country when I consider that God is just, and that his vengeance will not sleep forever." If this was appropriate to the institution of Slavery in his day, when the great minds of the nation everywhere were circumscribing its limits, and looking to its gradual extirpation, how much

more so as it now exists; boldly raising its hideous front, and proclaiming in the light of the last half of the nineteenth century, that its origin and mission are divine; that it has existed in all past times, and that it will exist in all future: that it does not ask for toleration, as it did in Mr. Jefferson's day, but demands equality with Freedom; and not content with that, seeks by force and fraud to wrest from Freedom her share of the common heritage, and proclaims that "*the principle of Slavery is in itself right, and does not depend on difference of complexion.*"

I believe with that immortal Patriot and Statesman, that this problem of Slavery must be worked out by ourselves; this giant wrong must be extirpated, or consequences will ensue, the contemplation of which, are abhorrent to the enlightened human mind.

While I entertain these sentiments towards Slavery, I have always cherished feelings of kindness towards our Southern brethren. I could not forget that our fathers shared together the perils and dangers of Revolutionary times; that they together built up this fair fabric of Government, under which, by the blessing of Providence, we have enjoyed so much prosperity. I desire to see this Government maintained, and this Union perpetuated. I desire also to see the Government brought back to the design and intention of its founders, which was to establish Freedom among men; not Slavery! I desire to see the former national, the latter sectional, and quietly abolished by the people of the States where it exists, in obedience to the promptings of their own better feelings, and in compliance with the universal desire of enlightened public sentiment everywhere. These views of Slavery are not new with me, nor with the party with which in times past I have been associated.

When I was recommended by the people of Terre-Haute and vicinity for the appointment of Post Master in the spring of 1853, certain personal enemies, at this time warm supporters of Mr. Davis, made affidavit that I was an Abolitionist, and that I was a subscriber to the National Era, an anti-Slavery paper, published in Washington.

In reply, I placed upon the files of the Department, subject to the inspection of the President, the following: "I believe Slavery to be an evil, social, political, and moral; a curse to both white and black races, and would like to see the people of the States where it exists, taking some steps towards gradual prospective emancipation." In reply to the charge that I was a subscriber to the National Era, I placed upon the same records the following:

"The charge is true, I have taken it and paid for it, ever since the attempt was made to destroy it by a mob. I expect to take that, or any other paper, just as long as I please, and ask no man's permission. I take and pay for three Demo-

eratic papers published in our own State; I also take and pay for two Whig and two Neutral papers, and one Independent. Am I any the worse for looking at all sides?—any the less qualified to defend the principles of Democracy? Is ignorance bliss? If so, then my assailants must be very happy, to make it a grave charge against me that I am a subscriber to the National Era! Democracy will have sunk very low indeed, when such sentiments become common among its advocates.”

No man has better understood my sentiments on the slave question than John G. Davis, and I have no hesitation in saying that up to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854, he was as much opposed to that institution as I was, as I shall proceed to show. It is well known that when the Slave question was up for discussion in 1848 and 1849, that the Democratic as well as the Whig party of this State, stood square up in favor of the Wilmot Proviso, excluding Slavery from the Territories. Mr. Davis was a member of the Democratic Convention which assembled at Indianapolis on the 8th of January, 1849, and was one of a Committee which reported the following resolutions, which were adopted by the Convention.

Resolved, That the institution of slavery ought not to be introduced into any Territory where it does not now exist.

Resolved, That inasmuch as New Mexico and California, re in fact and in law, free Territories, it is the duty of Congress to prevent the introduction of Slavery within their limits.

So much for Mr. Davis' position in 1849; then we agreed exactly.

In February, 1850, I left my home for California, via Cape Horn; was six months making the passage; was sick all the time there, and on my way home; returned in the winter of 1851. During that time I had very little knowledge of what Congress had done for the adjustment of the Territorial questions which were exciting so much interest when I left home. I knew that California had been admitted as a Free State, and that was about all. In the spring of 1851, after my health had been restored, I procured a copy of the Compromise measures, and the impression made upon my mind was, that too much had been yielded to the South in the adjustment of these questions; particularly by the passage of the Fugitive Slave law. I liked the old law better, with its trial by jury, before our own local magistrates, and disliked the intervention of Federal officers in our State affairs.

Soon afterwards, I was in Parke county getting fruit trees to set out on my farm, and accidentally met Mr. Davis on my return as I passed through Montezuma. It was there, and from himself that I first learned that he was seeking the Congressional nomination.

As my mind was at that time somewhat exercised about the Compromise measures, we conversed freely about them, and I was pleased to find that there was a correspondence of views between us on these questions.

Under date of May 20, 1851, he wrote me as follows:

"You and I differ but little, if any, in regard to our views of the Fugitive Slave law, as connected with the approaching election, but from what I learned from Greencastle recently, and the subsequent course of the "Journal" of your place, our party and candidate will be required to take the most ultra ground in favor of the law "*as it is.*" [The italics are his own.] I confess that I was greatly astonished at the course of the Journal after a long conversation in regard to this question very recently. What does he mean by his last article on this subject?"

Having permitted Mr. Davis to explain his own position on the Fugitive Slave Law, I will now pass over his correspondence for a period of two and a half years, and will introduce him again, commencing with the session of 1853-4:

"WASHINGTON, January 29, 1854.

"The Slavery question is to give us trouble again, growing out of the formation of a Territorial Bill for Nebraska. Let our friends keep cool and quiet until we see what shape it may assume. *I intend to do my duty regardless of consequences, and feel unwilling to crouch to the Slave power, but keep this to yourself.* The feeling is getting up: it may all be satisfactorily adjusted, but I have my worst fears."

"WASHINGTON, February 4th, 1854,

"The question as presented in the Nebraska Bill on the exciting subject of slavery, is an unfortunate one just now. *It was unnecessary and ill advised.* I have told Douglas so; I have told the President so, but it is to be met. It will pass the Senate, and we must meet it in the House. Bright and Pettit are for it; *all, or nearly all, of our Delegation in the house are at heart against it,* yet what they will finally do, this deponent saith not. *I could vote for the proposition to leave the question of Slavery to be decided by the people when they form a State Constitution, as in the case of Utah and New Mexico; that is the Compromise of 1850, but to go far beyond that, and repeal by direct legislation, the Missouri Compromise, is a bitter pill, and as at present advised, I don't feel inclined to do it.* * * What is the feeling of our people on the subject? *Would they sustain me were I to vote against the Bill?* I am aware that in a close District like mine, it is a dangerous question. There is a great deal of feeling here, and the excitement is to increase. It is an unlucky movement indeed, and proves that great men often act the d—d fool as well as other people."

WASHINGTON, Feb. 13, 1854.

"The 'Journal' had best not commit itself yet for Douglass' Bill ?

"HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Feb. 15, 1854.

"I hope the 'Journal' will not take as yet decided ground for the Nebraska Bill. We need not be in a hurry."

"HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Feb. 18, 1854.

"The only thing that gives me trouble is the proposed repeal of the Missouri Compromise. It is the first time in my life that I have felt uneasy, or inclined to hesitate about my duty. *If I go for it, it may defeat me,—if against it, it may do the same. Whatever course I may finally take, I must of course be prepared to defend.*"

It should be borne in mind by the reader, that Mr. Davis was then in his second term, and had written letters to prominent members of his party, previous to his second canvass, that if elected that time, his ambition would be satisfied, and that he would not again become a candidate: and yet, when a great disturbing element of sectionalism and strife was ruthlessly thrust into the halls of Legislation, instead of being governed by the promptings of his judgment, and his better feelings, and enquiring what was just and true, and what was demanded by the best interests of his country, he was anxious only about his chances for a re-election. "*He was at heart against the measure,*" to use his own words, but upon nicely ballancing the chances of re-election, he concluded to go for it, and that too at the eleventh hour, and yet claims credit for his support of it?"

Can human assurance go any further than that? If after this, men will support him on the ground of his advocacy of the Nebraska Bill, they must be singularly constituted indeed; he might well exclaim to them in the language of Mokanna to his deluded followers :

"There, ye wise fools, behold your Saint, your Star,
Ye would be dupes and victims, and ye are."

Few men like to be deceived, and fewer there are willing to hear the odium of supporting the deceiver, after his trickery has been exposed.

To a mind constituted like that of Mr. Davis, the disastrous consequences resulting from the repeal of the Missouri Compromise are nothing, provided he can ride into the Legislative Halls, on the storm which he has assisted to raise. What if the country is convulsed with civil strife? What if the virgin soil of fair young Kansas is wet with fraternal blood? What is it to him that freedom of speech is made a felony, and that five free presses have been destroyed in the attempt to force Slavery into that unhappy Territory? What cares he for the dwellings of private citizens given to the flames, and others pillaged and their inmates insulted and

outraged? What if the horses and cattle of the hardy Pioneer are taken from his plough, and his fields, by armed ruffians acting under the name of laws in themselves infinitely more disgraceful, than the murderous wretches who pretended to execute them? What if blight, mildew and wretchedness, settle down as a cloud upon the fairest portion of Freedom's heritage? That is nothing to him! He has houses and lands, and bonds and mortgages; his person and his property are secure, and his family rest quietly. It is something to us, however, if not to him; it is something to every *man* in this country; and to every woman and child; instead of settling down quietly and permitting the wrongs of our brethren to remain unredressed, every *man* should gird himself for the contest; every woman should raise her voice as our mothers did in Revolutionary times, and if she has a son, exhort him to do his duty, and if necessary, to lay down his life for the cause. Bid him go forth like the Spartan, to return victorious, or borne upon his shield.

Instead of asking a re-election after the disastrous consequences which have resulted from the betrayal of your trust in the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise, it would be much more befitting your case to retire from public life, and seek in works meet for repentance, to atone in some measure for the evils which you have assisted to bring upon your unhappy country.

I now dismiss the serious part of this matter, but as tragedies are usually relieved by a farce afterwards, I will give a few extracts from this great man's correspondence of a lighter character, and hope that where the names of individuals are used by him, that they will take it all as a good joke, and not be surprised if they wake up some morning and find themselves suddenly famous.

Davis asserts a truism, then becomes poetical, and is exercised for fear *Cass* will be nominated, and the *Party* beaten:

“WASHINGTON CITY, January 15, 1852.

My Dear Friend:—There is too much corruption, too little honesty, among politicians of the present day.

* * * The old fogies here, with Bright and Lane,
Yes, General Joseph Lane,
Are working might and main,
To secure the nomination of Gen. Cass again,

so that some of them can be provided for in the way of office. Let me tell you now, and I trust you will remember it, that if Cass is nominated, he is as certainly defeated as he lives; mark that! * * * Do go to Indianapolis and plead with our friends not to sacrifice our *party* again to gratify a few men.”

Davis thinks the Free Soilers, Nullifiers and Union men, work admirably together. No fear of Kinky Heads then :

"WASHINGTON, June 21st, 1852.

Pierce seems to be acceptable to all portions of the Democratic party, and the Free Soilers of the North, and the State's Rights [Nullifiers,] and Union men of the South, fall in with alacrity."

Complimentary to Col's. Thompson and Dowling, and Jesse D. Bright:

"ROCKVILLE, April 9th, 1853.

I cannot think Thompson will do any thing in the matter. Dick needs *my friendship in certain matters* of his, too much to incur my displeasure. Dowling is a dog;—he and Bright are chums." * *

Davis has our worthy Mayor in a tight place:

"ROCKVILLE, May 13th, 1853.

I have Patterson in my own power, and can crush him whenever it seems in the course of events necessary."

Davis dislikes the course of the Greencastle paper; thinks it lauds Bright too much, and himself not enough. Thinks that Jennings and Farley are the reliable Democrats in Putnam:

"ROCKVILLE, June 4, 1853.

The course of the Greencastle paper towards me is curious.

* * * The paper has scarcely ever mentioned my name. It has always had my good will, and some of my *means*, still it is silent. Every number has a laudatory article of Mr. Bright, to the exclusion of every one else; and the reader would infer that he was the only *man* in Congress from our State. Mr. Daniels was an applicant for Post Master there; he is the Brother-in-law of Turk. [the Editor] I gave him my support and he will get the appointment against other near and dear friends there, *still not a whisper of my name is heard. I feel mortified at this state of things*, and disinclined to submit to it much longer. * * * * Jennings and Jo. Farley are the reliable men there, and in them you may confide every thing."

Davis desires his friend, J. O. Jones, to make up for the short comings of his editorial friends.

"ROCKVILLE, June 11, 1853.

It seems to me that a well written article for your paper in regard to my course generally,—my attention to public and private business,—*my standing with the Administration*, [doubtful compliment at this day] as evidenced by the appointments already made; my unobtrusive but firm and straightforward course, *with such other remarks as might be thought prudent, would just now have an excellent effect.*

Would it be asking too much for you to prepare such an article for your next paper, if you have time?"

Davis has our worthy Mayor again in a *tight place* :

“ROCKVILLE, June 17, 1853.

I learn that Patterson looks dreadfully bad, and has'nt the courage to look a *man* in the face. * * * Hav'nt I got him bad?”

Complimentary to Hon. Andrew Humphreys, of Greene; Gov. Wright and W. J. Brown :

“ROCKVILLE, July 12, 1853.

You speak of Andy Humphreys. He is a very clever fellow, but it is utterly out of the question to elect him to Congress.

In Owen and Greene my majority was nearly 400, while his vote for the Senate was only 29, against a man personally unpopular, but greatly his intellectual superior. * * *

Brown is appointed Mail Agent at last; Wright went to Washington for the *sole purpose* of aiding him, and was successful.”

Davis gets alarmed about the *Whigs, Abolitionists* and *Hards*, with *Senator Bright* for their leader.

“WASHINGTON, Dec. 19, 1853.

“I am fearful we shall yet have trouble here. The election of Tucker by the Senate as public printer, by a Union of *Whigs, Abolitionists*, and *Hards*, is the beginning of trouble. * * * Bright is the leader of the faction, and is throwing every possible obstacle in the way of the Administration. Will our *Democracy* sustain him in his course?”

Davis threatens Hough awfully :

“WASHINGTON, January 25, 1854.

“Is Hough abusing the Administration? If so he shall be removed in one hour from the the time the fact is made known to be. He may abuse me, but he shan't abuse the hand that feeds him ; mark that.”

Davis gets *almost* into a passion. — Judge Eckles to be skinned.—Pettit, McLean, Bright and a dead Nigger :

“WASHINGTON, Feb. 13, 1854.

I am very much inclined to write to Eckels directly, and skin him within an inch of his life, and hurl defiance in his teeth, but will wait until I hear from you again.

And Pettit has made McLean believe he got him the printing, eh? Well that's rich enough. Well he got it just this way : He refused to sign any recommendation for the *Journal*, and was striving to give this printing to another paper, and when he went to the Department to make his last effort, he learned the printing had been given to McLean, and doubtless as he and Bright had often done before, straightway writes Mac that *he* had procured him the printing. * * * The Senator who would do such a thing, would steal the shroud off a dead Nigger.”

McLean again.—Mr. Lyons, of Vermillion, Hugh Stewart, John S. Walters, of Parke, and Col. Cookerly, of Vigo. All done up on Sunday :

“WASHINGTON, March 5, 1854.

* * * The fact is, after getting the printing, he, McLean, did not want to give me any credit for it, from the fact that he wants to go to Congress, and wishes it to be understood that he is under no obligations to me, and has a perfect *right* to enter the lists for a nomination. Such intolerable vanity and stupidity ! * * * Jim Lyons is against me, no doubt. He wanted the P. O. at Clinton, and I left it to a majority of the Democrats there, and they *were nearly all for McCulloch*, and I gave him the office, and Lyons has of course got mad at me, instead of his Democratic neighbors, that's all. *He is generally against the Democratic candidates for everything. Hugh Stewart is treacherous, and unreliable at best.* John S. Walters has always been against me, growing out of competition in business between him and Benson at Montezuma. * * * Cookerly has no strength outside of Vigo ; his course may do him some good, but if it does may I be damned.”

Davis grows remarkably modest; laughs at Cookerly outright, and gives the leading points of an article that McLean ought to get somebody to write for his paper, himself being incompetent for such an effort:

“WASHINGTON, March 13, 1854.

* * * The people have a right to ask me to serve them, if they think best, and no one can complain ; and the modesty displayed in not desiring to thrust myself on my party, ought to be regarded as a merit in these degenerate days. [Ha ! ha ! ha ! rich.] * * * *

Cookerly ! Cookerly !! Cookerly !!! Now ain't we strange critters ? Can't he see any thing ? He has been a Democrat five years, and a candidate about five times ; that's making modest drafts on his new party bed-fellows we would think.

How does McLean feel now ? Mac ought to have a little discretion, and I hope he will. He ought to write an article for his paper. (no, some one else ought to write it for him, for he can't) alluding to my course here. The constant and unremitting attention to my duties here and to the people ; that I am never absent from my post ; that I am speaking when necessary,—not for Buncomb, but for the practical accomplishment of business. That my candid, [?] straight forward [?] and gentlemanly [?] bearing, has given me friends and position here, rarely acquired in so short a time.”

Davis thinks Humphreys is to be his competitor—predicts his defeat by one thousand votes :

"WASHINGTON, March 27, 1854.

* * * A friend in Greencastle advises me that Andy Humphreys is the choice of, and will be pressed by, Eckles, Hough & Co., and that they are beginning to talk out on the subject. * * * I learn by letters from Spencer, that Humphreys will be my competitor. * * * If I withdraw, my opinion is he will get the nomination. * * * *Scott will beat him one thousand votes ; mark that !*"

Davis and the squatters.—Compliments McLean again.—Indites the substance of a letter that Cookerly ought to write to him, &c., &c.—Modesty moderate.

"WASHINGTON CITY, Sunday, April 9, 1854.

* * * Situated as I am, I hardly know what to do or say ; if I could be among the people, I would make some men *squat* ; but I can't. As for McLean, he is a fool, and except so far as he conducts the *Journal*, it matters not what he says or does ; but the *rascal* owes *it to me* to take ground, act the man, and be my friend. Ingratitude, however, is no uncommon thing now a-days.

What on earth is Cookerly doing? Why don't he come out and take ground for me at once? If he ever expects to succeed hereafter, this is his only hope. *He is one of the men I wrote to that I would not run again.* Now he stands in a position to place himself and me in a high position. In this way: He might write a letter to me, stating the fact of my letter to him in 1852, declining to run again ; that he thinks I ought to reconsider that determination, having faithfully represented the District, *and having thrown myself into the breach on the Nebraska question*; [ha! ha! !], it is due to me and the party, that I should have the right of going before the people on that question, &c. [Rich again,] Don't you see the effect it would have on my friends in the District [certainly we do,] and give him a position he can't attain without it. Can't some friend approach him? He never can have any chance without such a movement, and I think it would settle the question of my nomination.

[Remarkably modest man. How can the people fail to appreciate it?]

There is one thing I *know*, *i. e.*, the Whigs don't expect to beat me if I am a candidate, and if I am not, they confidently expect to carry the District by one thousand majority. This I know from the most reliable authority."

"WASHINGTON CITY, April 29th, 1854.

* * * Humphreys certainly can't do much, and he is the only man except Cookerly, working for the race."

Thinks the leaders are only *using* Humphreys.—Especially Complimentary to his friend McLean.—Frame work of an editorial :

“WASHINGTON, July 8th, 1854.

* * * I have no idea the leaders intend nominating Humphreys—they are *using* him to accomplish another object; that is, to nominate some one else. * * * McLean is a *damned* fool, and an ungrateful pup. [The italics are his own.] * * * I sent you the frame work of an editorial article which I hope you will have soon received. Now if you think *means* will secure an object in the County alluded to, tell me how much.”

“Infernal Factionists.”—Poor Cookerly.—Davis writes his own editorials.—“Infernal letters.”—Henry Secrest, Judge Eckels, Humphreys, Hanna and other distinguished Democrats :

“WASHINGTON CITY, July 13th, 1854.

Your long and satisfactory letter is received. I am gratified at the result of your County Convention. You were triumphant in every thing. It must have been a damper indeed, on those *infernal factionists*. *Poor Cookerly!* I do trust he will leave our party, and return to the Whigs; he is an article of furniture we don't want no how. * * *

I did not write the circular, but wrote a short editorial which I sent you.”

[This short editorial was a closely written article of ten pages, eulogistic of himself, which was published as original in the editorial columns of the ‘Journal’ by his friend McLean, whom he stigmatises but a few days before as a “*damned fool and an ungrateful pup*.” The original article in Mr. Davis’ hand writing, is in my possession. I have room only for a few choice *extracts*.]

“Mr. Davis became a candidate only four weeks before the election, and although then unaccustomed to public speaking, took the stump, canvassed the District with his *usual energy and marked ability*, meeting his competitor (the late Edward McGaughay) face to face, and *always sustained himself with great credit to himself and party*. * * *

“We have not been inattentive observers of the Congressional career of our Representative, [of course not] nor have we been without the means of becoming familiar with that career, [of course not] and we frankly confess [Ah! what frankness,] that we have not seen a single act of his, which does not meet our approval. [Of course not, not even the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, which you were at “*heart against*” to use your own language heretofore recorded.]

“He has recently delivered one of the most *elegant and able arguments* in Congress in favor of granting proper and Constitutional aid to construct a Rail Way across the Continent to the Pacific Ocean, by which the Atlantic and Pacific States may be brought into immediate and speedy communication.”

[What modesty. “*One of the most elegant, and able arguments!*” The people ought to vote for him a *fourth time*.]

"Mr. Davis has given his firm support to the Bill organizing Territorial Governments for Kansas and Nebraska." [What do you mean by firm support? Could you give it firm support when you were at "*at heart against the Bill*," to use your own words; when you were writing letters to your friends against it, and advising Democratic papers not to commit themselves to its support, according to your own recorded sentiment. Do you call that backing your friends? Out upon such charlatany! It is more becoming a thimble rigger than a member of Congress.]

"*His good habits, plain unpretending manners, strong practical sense, and high business qualifications, have given him a position at Washington, calculated to reflect credit on himself and his constituents.*"

[Want of room precludes any further extracts. Had this article been written by the nominal editor, it might have passed for a fair newspaper puff, but when we consider that it is the Hon. M. C. eulogising himself, what confidence can be placed in him?]

Continuation of extracts from letter of 13th July.

"*Those infernal letters, [meaning letters of 1852, pledging himself not to become a candidate again,] have embarrassed me awfully.*

Like yourself, I am afraid of Putnam; ——— and others wrote me that Secrest was for me; since then, I learn there is a secret movement to run him; whether he winks at it I cannot say; if he does, I am afraid he will succeed. Owen county is for him no doubt. Will Humphreys submit to this and join in? I think not. Hanna and Eckels hate Secrest worse than they hate me, and I should think would fight him to the last. Secrest opposed Hanna's nomination for Judge bitterly. Then will our party run a man who never would run when there was any danger, and hard fighting to do?

If he persists in running, *he can't say* I wrote him that I would not run.

No letters or pledges out to him, and I *hope my friends will fight him boldly and to the bitter end. He never did a thing for the party in his life—never.* Don't stop for want of means: I will settle all. ——— and ——— must be seen.

Try and get Clay, or a portion of it at all hazards.

———Of your place told Dr. Gilkerson of Highland that Secrest would be nominated—that he [———,] intended to be at Bowling Green, and do all he could for Secrest. I think this will fizzle out—still he may unite Owen, Putnam, Greene and Clay. I think this is the only dangerous movement,—*No one else can begin to get the nomination.*"

Compliments to Cookerly, Patterson & Co.,—Especially complimentary to Judge Hanna.—Gov. Wright encourages him.

“WASHINGTON, July 15th, 1854.

* * * Your County Convention was overwhelming. What a distinct rebuke to Cookerly, Patterson & Co. * * How must these *poor scoundrels* feel at this wonderful and to them unexpected result? * * *

Yes, James MCLEAN Hanna is a pretty exponent of the feelings of the Clay County Democracy truly. He has never been my friend, never! When I spoke at Bowling Green two years ago, he discouraged me all he could; told me publicly the “Homestead” was a humbug, and that I could not get more than two hundred and forty majority in Clay.

* * *The fact is he is a poor driveling pup, and his greatest desire is to keep every one down to his own level.* I presume he and Cookerly will do all they can to defeat me, should I receive the nomination. * * Joe. Wright writes me encouragingly, but as you remark, he does not know much about our district now.”

A long letter, but rather interesting.—Franklin and others to unite on Secrest.—Humphreys to be beat two thousand votes.—Complimentary to “*a dozen rascals.*”—The sot, and corrupt demagogue, Willard, sent out by Senator Bright to defeat *him*.—He wants the fight made hot.—Will be with me for life and death.—Appeals to the Creator’s *justice* to spare his life to serve his friends.

“HOUSE OF REPS. Washington July 19th, 1854.

Dear Jones:— * * * Your views of the movements going on are pretty correct. I am satisfied Henry Secrest expects the nomination. They don’t think Humphreys can be nominated, and Franklin and others, intend to unite on Secrest. Mark what I tell you. I shall not be surprised if they succeed. Will our party submit if they do, by such intrigue and fraud in getting up a County Convention. If our Conventions are to be got up in this way, and forty-nine fiftieths of the party misrepresented by such infamous trickery, will our party submit to such an infamous farce? Now Eckels pretends to hate Secrest—so does Hanna; but won’t they all unite on him, to beat me? I say they will. Now, when you get to the Convention if you find it packed, would it not be best to propose an adjournment, until the various Counties can be heard and express their preferences. * *

I don’t feel inclined to be beaten by the means used by a half dozen men in Clay and Putnam. I don’t feel like submitting to it. I don’t feel like encouraging such trickery. *Why sir, how much would Humphreys be beat in the District?—Two thousand votes at least! Shall the party be made to submit to this by a dozen rascals? I say no.* Secrest and Eckels have purposely kept this list of Delegates from my friends. *Fraudulently and villainously. No doubt of it, or the object of it.”*

I learn Willard is to be at Bowling Green—sent there no doubt to defeat me—watch him—that is the game—sent out by Bright—no doubt of it. Three men out of five of the strapped ticket in my District. The purpose is apparent—Must we be run over and ridden down by this kind of game? *Better be slaves at once; I, for one, will not submit to it.* Willard has been in my District; perhaps in your town. He was in Greencastle: his mission there, cannot be by me misunderstood.

Now my *good friend* I have this to say: Don't let them beat us—stand firm; expose them if it becomes necessary—*I will be with you for life and death.* If we fall, let us fall together and fighting.

See our true friends and put them on their guard. *Make the fight hot*, if it becomes necessary. By all means, if ——— is there, get him to be prudent. Don't let him serve as President. They will want to make him President, and then say Parke wants all. See to this if you please. Let ——— go into Sullivan immediately. ——— and ——— I fear have not been seen. *Spare no pains or expense, I will make it all right.* * * *

I hope to live to repay you for your kind services. God is just, and I think will spare my life to serve my friends.

Ever yours, JNO. G. DAVIS."

Feels very grateful.—Complimentary to Coookerly and Hamill.—Finis:

"WASHINGTON, July 30th, 1854.

Dear Jones: Yours 26th is received. Thank you for your long and graphic account of the Convention. It was rich, no doubt, but we can afford to be magnanimous now. How dreadfully you whipped them. Poor fellows, they are to be pitied. I need not say how thankful I feel for the constant and unwavering support of my friends. I feel, and realize, all my obligations. * * * Now, Cookerly has played *hell*; hasn't he? Why didn't the *fool* do right from the first, and act the man? How much better his position would have been. You are right about Hamill; he is the *damdest fool of all*, but he is quite harmless. I can write no more now.

Ever your friend,

JNO. G. DAVIS."

Having quoted somewhat freely from Mr. Davis' letters to me, I will conclude with a quotation from one of my letters to him.

"TERRE-HAUTE, December 23d, 1855

Dear Sir: * * It is true I was opposed to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and have never yet seen anything in its effects to satisfy me that it was either just or expedient.—*You did not then differ from me in opinion.* At that time the country was in a state of repose on the Slavery question; the

Democratic party never was stronger, or more united. How has it been since? More sectional strife has existed than at any previous period in our history. I was one of a numerous body of democrats in this State whose party attachments were too strong to be alienated even by that hasty and uncalled for legislation: we were willing to acquiesce in the decision of the majority, hoping that the natural preponderance of emigration from the free States, and the favorable sentiments of non-Slave holders from Slave States, would be strong enough to establish free Institutions in Kansas.

Since then, what have we witnessed? When it became apparent that the Free State men of Kansas outnumbered their opponents, and that the question would be decided in favor of free Institutions at the first election, if left to the actual settlers, then it was, that armed bands from Missouri invaded Kansas, took forcible possession of the polls, proclaimed a pro-Slavery Legislature, and established a code of laws disgraceful to the country.

The vital principle of the Kansas Bill, the right of the people to make their own laws, was struck down by these ruffians; free speech made a felony, a free press proscribed, and the right of suffrage trampled in the dust. I denounced it then, I denounce it now, and I intend to denounce it whenever I think proper to express an opinion on the subject. So far from being amenable to just censure for these sentiments, I should be a base recreant to the principles taught by the Fathers of the Republic, if I entertained any other. * *

Yours, Respectfully,

J. O. JONES."

John G. Davis, Esq.

Seven months and over have elapsed since the foregoing letter was written. Would to God that the scenes of those months could be erased from our history. How stands the account now? Kansas enslaved! Five Free Presses destroyed in a vain attempt to make it free; the military power of the Government actively employed in enforcing those villainous laws, of a villainous and usurping Legislature: the best and bravest of freedom's advocates in chains or in exile: her thriving villages devastated, her fair fields fast becoming desert wastes, and her citizens daily insulted and outraged.

Let the people ponder well before they give their support to the men who are pledged to continue and perpetuate the same ruinous policy, if again entrusted with power.

In conclusion, I will only say, that all the letters of Mr. Davis' quoted from by me, and the editorial article in his own hand writing, are now in my possession, and if he doubts the fairness of the quotations, they are open to the inspection of a committee of his friends and mine.